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**By the Same Author**

COMPANIONS OF THE WAY.

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN ACCOUNT  
WITH RELIGION.

THE DYNAMIC OF CHRISTIANITY.

A Study of the Vital and Permanent Element  
in the Christian Religion.

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

BOSTON AND NEW YORK

# COMPANIONS OF THE WAY





# COMPANIONS OF THE WAY

*A Handbook of Religion  
for Beginners*

BY

EDWARD MORTIMER CHAPMAN



BOSTON AND NEW YORK  
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TO  
E. N. C. AND L. T. C.





## PREFACE

SOME time ago a friend, who is also a distinguished member of Harvard University, asked me to suggest a constructive book upon Christianity, elementary enough to meet the need of the young man and woman of nineteen or twenty, possessing average ability and education. The titles of several useful and inspiring books came at once to my mind. But one seemed to place undue emphasis upon questions which time has passed by, while another was something too discursive and philosophical to meet the concrete need which he indicated. This little volume has grown out of

our conversation. I hope that it may help to show the Way; or, if not, that it may at least be a way-mark by which some wiser guide shall profit.

E. M. C.

WESTWAYS,  
NEW LONDON, CONN.  
18 December, 1917.

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# COMPANIONS OF THE WAY

A HANDBOOK  
OF RELIGION FOR BEGINNERS

## I

### INTRODUCTION

ONE of the wonders of the world is that young people still ask "What is it to be a Christian?" and "How can I be a Christian?" The religion of Jesus Christ has sometimes been persecuted, sometimes questioned, and more often neglected. In the time of Diocletian, the Roman Emperor, to be a Christian put one in danger of the lions or of the stake. In Wesley's day at Oxford the Christian life that seemed to him vital and full of real

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meaning subjected him to ridicule. Toward the end of the last century, when a new scientific method was making its way among the people, many thought that at last Christianity was outgrown and would be forgotten. In the crash of the Great War of 1914, some men said that it had broken down. But in point of fact it has renewed its youth in every one of these periods. The martyrs of Diocletian's day bore a witness to the reality of faith that their world was forced to heed. The ridicule to which Wesley and his associates were subject simply gave their earnestness and love of reality a better chance. A hundred years later new discoveries in science caused Religion to think again about some of its reasons, and to array

its arguments in a different manner; but it finally gave more arguments than it took away, and to many believers, forces that looked like enemies in the distance proved to be very good neighbors and sometimes quite congenial friends when they drew near. The catastrophe of the Great War gave a new impulse to the spirit of Religion in many quarters and supplied such an object lesson of the worth and need of Christ's Law of Love as the world had scarcely seen before.

This is a phenomenon; that is, something which we observe and must try to account for. It is very much more than a mere "happening." There is reality behind it and a deep human experience running through it. More-

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over, it is a living experience. It concerns the present as much as the past. It is your business and mine to do something about it just as much as it was the business of the Christians of the first century.

If any one should ask how you know that Christianity is a living experience instead of a mere dead tradition, there are many answers ready, but the one which concerns us now is that it has a wonderful way of feeding upon circumstance and growing by it which belongs only to living things. Dead things decay under the influence of their surroundings, as the fallen tree drops into fragments and goes back to earth. Lifeless things, that is, things that never had and cannot have life, are apparently indifferent to their sur-



roundings, as the stone takes heat and cold, wet and dry without being perceptibly affected by them, although in reality slowly worn away. It is a sign of life to use the things within and without in the interests of more and better life. Some of these things are favorable and easily used. Others are hostile and must be tamed and managed to be of use. When I see a boat beating into a harbor against a strong offshore wind, I know it to be under control and with a living hand at its helm. Boats do not drift after that fashion. They have no means in themselves of getting on by help of a wind that is against them. Men have such means. For generations they have compelled unfavorable winds to serve them. The higher they are in

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the scale of life and intelligence the greater their power to endure, to correct their own mistakes, and to tame hostile surroundings into service if not into friendliness.

The Christian Religion shows just these marks of vitality. It has been persecuted again and again; yet it has endured. It has been neglected and treated with contempt; but it has never been forgotten, and has shown a remarkable power of revival. It has been corrupted, and evil has too often been done in its name; but reformation has always succeeded to these periods of moral sickness, and the forces of reformation have almost always come from within the Christian body or community, — a very striking evidence of life. Furthermore, it would

be hard to exaggerate the ability which Christian faith has shown to learn of its adversaries, to make gain of hard conditions, and to convert its seeming enemies into servants and even into friends.

“But what,” you may ask, “has all this to do with me?” The answer to that question is a further sign that Christianity is a vital faith instead of a dead tradition. As you have read the opening pages of this little book, you have almost certainly taken one of two attitudes toward its subject. You have felt the stirring of hope that perhaps the book might help you along the Christian Way; that it might answer some puzzling questions, solve some problem, or furnish guidance and inspiration. Or you have felt a certain

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repulsion toward it because it deals with this very question of religion and may conceivably be right in maintaining the claim of religion. It is a claim, which, if it exist, you would perhaps rather not have pressed upon you. A multitude of subjects might be broached, the importance of which you would admit. Here, for instance, lying upon my table, is a book entitled "The Family." It is a very informing and valuable treatment of the history of the family relation. The theme is important. Many people would approach it with interest; but very few of these would feel any thrill of elation or of dread about the theme itself. They would not think of siding with or against the author except in some matter of judgment. We are



generally content to take the problems of the family as we come to them or as they are thrust upon us.

Religion does not hold thus aloof from us or permit us to keep apart from it. It will not let us alone. We can, of course, rule it out of our life; but we know that we must guard the doors or it will come in again. Man is incurably religious; he is a "religious animal," as a philosopher once remarked. There must be some way of satisfying this desire for religion on the one hand and of quieting the dread of it upon the other. The interest may, if unwisely fed, become fanaticism; the distaste or dread may, if yielded to, lead to a kind of hardness of heart which must finally rob life of its highest satisfactions and

powers. Both of these issues are bad. We are meant to live with the great questions of our souls and to answer them after such a fashion that we shall become brave, competent, good, and contented.

Jesus Christ opened such a way. He not only opened but followed it, making it plain and practicable to His friends. These in turn induced others to try it; until now, although still imperfectly known and kept, it has led so many people from evil into good and from restlessness into peace, that it is known the world around as the Way of Life. This volume is meant to be a handbook for that Way.

## II

### WHO IS A CHRISTIAN?

THERE are four steps up which we naturally climb to the full experience of a Christian. The first is **Hearing**. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear," said Jesus repeatedly to those about Him. The words probably represent a formula that public teachers were in the habit of using; yet to young readers of the Gospels they often seem almost absurd in their simplicity. I can still remember that as children we always inclined to smile at them. As we grow older, if we grow old in the right way, we should become simpler and more tolerant than

we were as children, and see beauty in things we once half-despised. So it is the experienced man who often sets truest value on these words of Jesus. They represent the first approach to Christ. Some people never find Him because they never stop to hear. When the wonder of the stars above puts its question, they dismiss it lightly. When their hearts within cry out for the living God, they stifle the cry. And when He says, "Come unto me," the words find them a little hostile, somewhat fearful, and a good deal indifferent. They do not attend. Now, it is the purpose of this book to take nothing for granted except certain great needs and experiences which we all recognize. I do not say that you ought to stop and hear Jesus Christ

because He is the Saviour of the world. You may not yet know Him to be such a Saviour. But Religion is a great experience of life. For good or ill it has played a tremendous part in history and it is a vital concern of millions of people to-day. It is not a thing to be left on one side. No well-balanced life can afford to be indifferent to it. The nurture of the soul, the problems of belief, worship, and the springs of conduct are a real and large concern of every man. The first step in settling the question of religion is to attend to it. And the moment we come to attend to the question of religion we find the words of Jesus Christ in our ears; for no sane person is likely to deny that He is a high authority in this field. We may be for

Him or against Him, but we cannot ignore Him.

If, now, we listen, what is it that we hear? It is a man of humble birth and calling who knows what men bear, long for, and rejoice in. He remembers men's bodies, for He feeds and heals them; but He seems to care particularly for the deeper life of their hopes, fears, desires, and purposes. He finds people who feel that they have done wrong; and tells them that there is a way of forgiveness. Others are lost and lonely because the world of experience is so big and they are so small. He tells them that they have a Father in Heaven who marks their going out and coming in; Who is acquainted with all their ways; Who loves them and counts them in His



family. Then he finds among men a strange hunger and thirst after goodness. He tells them that this is a sign of high destiny, that there is food and drink for such desires, and that if they will take His Way they shall finally be satisfied. He finds human life miserably marred by all kinds of ill-will, and He tells men most emphatically that they must live brotherly together; because only upon men of good-will can any blessing come that shall be worth having and keeping. This is what our ears hear when they are open to the voice of Jesus Christ. No one, I think, would deny that it is great news for the world, — something of first-rate importance, — if only it be true.

The second step, then, which the

beginner is to take is that of Discipleship or Learning. We must not only hear the words of Jesus, but if we would treat our own need fairly we must study, observe, and learn how the word fits the world. What was the substance of Jesus' teaching? Has anybody ever given it a fair trial in life? How has it worked? These are the questions which the fair-minded hearer who has some sense of the greatness of the news will ask and try to answer. In doing this, he will stand with the Disciples whom Jesus called about Him in order to instruct and train them; and in so far as he is sympathetic and glad to believe the best that he conscientiously can, he is already a Christian in the sense in which they were Christians.

He will then study the life as well as the words of Jesus as these are found in the Gospels. He will read the story of man's need and hope of just such good news as Jesus claimed to bring, as it is told in the Old Testament. He will acquaint himself with the Acts of the Apostles, by which I mean not only the New Testament book of that name, but the Letters of St. Paul, and the lives of typical Christians since his day. He will especially observe the aims and endeavors of men and women who, in his own acquaintance, seem to have much of the Spirit of Christ. And he will be fair with those portions of the Gospel which seem to rebuke him or make him uncomfortable.

What may such a disciple be ex-

pected to learn? The substance of the Gospel came to him in his first hearing of Christ's words. Now he should look again at it to see a little more in detail not only what Jesus taught, but how He taught, so that in his learning he may get the parts of the teaching into right proportion.

The central principle in the personal belief, the teaching and the life of Jesus Himself seemed to be Love; by which He meant *good-will in action*. He believed that God loved men not in a dim, far-away sense, but with a good-will that sought the best for them. He believed in His own divine good-will which led Him to serve His fellow-men even unto death. He believed in a Spirit of good-will which should always be in the world

to bring in the Kingdom of God. Sometimes He spoke as though this would take a long time; and sometimes He pictured the Kingdom as coming very suddenly; but soon or late it was to prevail and in it all truth was to be turned into goodness. There was room in this Kingdom for everybody who would come in. Wherever a good man tried to serve God and his fellows, there the seed of the Kingdom was growing. Wherever a bad man left his selfishness and uncleanness and turned to Christ's Way, there the Kingdom spread over new ground. His own Spirit was always to be in the world. When men sinned they were soon or late to know it and to be unable to rest in sin. By degrees, the ideas of righteousness were

to establish themselves so firmly that they could not be ignored or forgotten. And every year that passed was to convince men more clearly that life finally means judgment. The real difference between right ways and wrong ways — that is, between the ways of active good-will and those of ill-will or selfishness — shall finally appear so clearly as to be seen of all.

To believe this and to act upon it was to be saved. Nothing could really harm the man of persistent good-will active toward God and man. He might be poor, but poverty could not belittle him. He might meet with all kinds of contradiction from men and things; through this divine Spirit he would prove to be conqueror and mysteriously more than conqueror. He must die, of



course ; and he might die at the hands of the very people to whom his good-will went out and whom he was trying to help. Death, however, could not kill such a man's soul of goodness, and if death came, indeed, by the hands of those whom he wished to help, it then took on a special sacrificial power ; with peculiar force and energy, this man's good-will lived on linked inseparably to divine and immortal ends.

Trusting thus to a Spirit of Truth and Love that should be always present for the help of the world, Jesus did not give to His Disciples any set of commandments, or a system of philosophy, or a form of worship. He left these things to the future. He seemed sublimely indifferent to mere form, though He seems never to have despised the

decencies of worship or of common life which had become sacred through use. This applied even to the form of His teaching, and the learner must remember it, or he is likely to be puzzled and confused at the seeming contradictions of the Gospel.

Jesus taught as an eminent teacher of His day and race might have been expected to teach, though with a startling and memorable authority. He did not follow lines of argument. He uttered precepts and parables, announced great principles of conduct, and left "sayings" for His friends to ponder. He used to approach a subject from one side, utter a saying about it, and then leave it as though He would never deal with it again; but only to deal with it from another side in the same

fashion on another day. The consequence is that His great principles of saving truth are perfectly consistent; while His sayings taken by themselves seem sometimes contradictory. You will find some people always trying to explain these contradictions away. Do not let their painful and inconclusive efforts either convince or worry you. On the other hand, do not let anybody take one great saying of Jesus and use it as a club to drive you into some sect or party.

For instance, Jesus said, "Resist not evil." It is a great and memorable utterance; but to find its right place in the scheme of the Christian's life it needs to be tested by the principle of love or good-will. Some people have tried to make it central in Christian

teaching as though no wrongdoer should ever be restrained or punished. But the rule of Christian conduct is the Golden Rule of doing to others as we would have them do to us. And this plainly teaches not only that protection should be given to the weak and defenseless, but that strong hands of restraint should be laid upon the evildoer, not in anger or at the dictate of vengeance, but because we, ourselves, in so far as we are men of goodwill, would wish to be restrained before we could injure others. A good many young people are really afraid to study the words of Jesus Christ because well-meaning but short-sighted persons have so often used such words to cudgel their neighbors into despising common sense. You may dismiss this fear.

There is a great deal of worldly wisdom, at once selfish and "smart," which the Words of Jesus do refute and which the Christian must deny. But common sense—the result of man's experience of what is right or wrong through many ages of his works and days—is a sacred thing. It is, indeed, one fruit of the presence of Christ's Spirit—the Holy Ghost—in the world; and you need have no fear that Jesus Christ will deny the fruit of His own Spirit. He will call upon you to control and deny the baser self that would make you a mere creature of earth; and He will invite you to self-sacrifice—that is, to the spending of self in the interests of the best things and the highest life; but He will not summon you to the impossible task of

crowding all your twentieth-century life into the forms of the first century, or of expanding it into a complete other-worldliness. He does not want to duplicate the life of St. Peter or to anticipate the life of an angel of Heaven in you. He wants you to be a man or woman of the present, doing to-day's work, but filled to the brim and running over with His Spirit of good-will trained and directed to the service of this generation and to the glory of Almighty God.

Among other things that will greatly impress you in learning of Jesus Christ is the extent to which His doctrine carried Him. He believed so mightily in the Love of God and in good-will among men that He not only lived, but died to prove them. He made the

supreme sacrifice, and the older you grow and the more you think, the more you are likely to see in that act. The old Hebrews had a theory that without shedding of blood there was no remission of sin. Some people have cried out against such a theory as brutal. But among the Hebrews the blood represented the life; and thus interpreted we see a truth for every age in their altar worship. Life that had gone wrong was only to be set right by the spending of life. Sad misuse has often been made of that principle; but it is still so largely true that it will be increasingly impressed upon you as your own life goes on, if your experience be at all a deep one. Christ taught it by word of mouth and by an act which has probably influenced human thought



and conduct more deeply than any other single act in the world's history.

The third step in being a Christian consists in translating what has been heard and learned into action—in *Doing*. This is not only natural and in accord with common sense, but it is in especial accord with modern methods. There was a time when wise men took most of their so-called "knowledge" and practically all their so-called "faith" on authority. They were told not only to believe, but what to believe—and they believed. Some people are sorry that such a day has passed and would be glad to recall it. But it is not likely to return, nor need the Christian waste any regrets upon it. Jesus Christ treats us as free men. He asks us to hear, examine, ponder, and

do. The doing, He tells us in effect, will lead us into a belief in which we can rest with entire assurance and comfort. The scientific method, in use for the last two generations and which has proved to be of enormous value, has been just this method of observation and experiment, or hearing, seeing, studying, and doing; and the world of thought in the present generation has been greatly influenced by a theory of truth which makes it depend upon its response to life. Now, I do not want you to think that the Gospel of Jesus Christ can be tested exactly as a chemical formula or hypothesis can be tested in a laboratory; or that the very clever theory of the nature of truth just referred to is big enough to compass all the truth of religion. But I do want

you to see that the Gospel does not come to you with a long list of propositions which you must believe at your peril without any chance to see whether they fit your need and the facts of life. There is a sweet reasonableness in the way in which Jesus Christ asks a learner to be also a doer of His will, assuring him that then he shall know the doctrine.

It is here that the vital step is to be taken. One may open one's ears to the Word and even study the Way with a sort of detached interest and as a spectator; but Doing, especially the hearty and sympathetic doing that counts, requires an act of the will. Here a man commits himself; he decides that he will rise and follow as did the disciples of old time. It is a most reasonable

thing to do. Of course his free will remains. If he chooses to forsake Jesus and His company, he can still do so; but to understand what Jesus and His company with their journey along the Way really mean, a man must join them cordially and not as a mere detached critic. I am not now speaking of joining the Church, but of a personal response to the summons of Christ like that which the early friends of Jesus made when they admitted His "Follow me" into their ears and His offer of friendship into their hearts. Though uninstructed yet and with the greater part of their experience still in the future, their wills worked as He asked them to work; they did the next thing which He indicated, and at once their greater experience began. Peter moved

out on the long way which was to change him from a man of impulse into a man of character, and Saul, the persecutor, took the turn in his road that was to make him a chief builder of the Church.

Of course, when you make this choice you will find obstacles in the way. Once these might have taken the form of persecutions that would have put life and all its dearest possessions in danger. That day has passed, at least in Christian lands. Later still, you might have had to face ridicule and taunts well-nigh as hard to bear as blows. That, too, is an experience not very likely to be met by any reader of this book. Most thoughtful people speak well of the ideals and purposes of Christianity; some, indeed, incline

to patronize it. But you are pretty sure soon or late to meet some superior person who will smile at your discipleship as though all devotion of that sort were a little out of date — certainly out of fashion; and this may be the very trial that your new faith needs.

For instance, you may hear some one quote the smart saying that nobody knows yet whether Christianity is true or not because it has never been tried. There is just enough resemblance to truth in those words to keep them alive. They represent the attitude of the man who stands outside a great conflict and says clever things about the awkwardness of people who are in the midst of it. Do not let your own endeavor to do be discouraged by this. Do not let yourself be made re-

sentful or bitter by it. Above all, do not be induced to imitate its cynicism. Smart though it seem, cynicism always rings false; the Christian with the grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ at his disposal can very well afford to be sneered at, and never has any need to sneer. You know, and the cynic knows, that Christianity has been tried. It has, to be sure, never completely developed, because it is a living, growing thing, showing new opportunities and making new demands as we go on with our Doing. The Apostles tried it, although there was not a perfect man among them, and exemplified it well enough to work untold blessing to their time. It was tried well enough to put a stop to the gladiatorial shows that were not only cruel in themselves,



but taught the easy lessons of cruelty to whole communities. It was tried well enough to convert the bad Middle Age custom of robbing and enslaving the shipwrecked into the coast-guard system of the United States and Great Britain which keeps skillful men with valuable equipment alert to help the distressed and save their goods. It was tried well enough to become the moving principle in abolishing the slave trade and finally in getting rid of slavery itself. Your cynical friend may say, "Oh, yes, you have abolished the slavery of buying and selling men's bodies; but you have introduced the wage-slavery that buys and sells their time, strength, and skill." Do not be baffled or confused by such a challenge. Just notice the beg-

ging of the whole question in the use of that word "wage-slavery." You know that the man who sneers would not, himself, hesitate a moment in his choice between slavery as it once existed and working for wages to-day even under highly unsatisfactory conditions, if such a choice were forced upon him. The active spirit of good-will toward all men—that is, the Holy Spirit proclaimed by Jesus—has wrought an enormous improvement in the conditions under which the world's work is done and in changing the slave system to the wage system. Christianity has been tried so far. But its Spirit will not let us rest here. The wage system is not good enough so long as it compels people to work habitually for too long hours, or for unfair pay, or in

dangerous or unwholesome surroundings. It urges us to do something further. It will not let us rest until the wage system be made right and fair, or, if that cannot be done, until it be superseded by something better in itself. In all the discussion of such things—and your generation will hear more and more of it—Christianity is being tried and responding to the trial.

You know, too, that it has been tried and stood the test triumphantly in a multitude of individual lives. If you have had a normal experience, a whole group of people have touched your life whose touch was always true and wholesome. They were not only honest, but honorable; not only serviceable, but they did their service with good-will; living in this world

there was something more to them than this world could quite account for. "The power of an endless life" showed in some measure in what they said and did. Imperfect people all of them, and some of them forced to struggle hard with evil tempers and besetting sins, they left no doubt in your mind that they were Doers of Christ's Word and Companions of the Way. If you chose to pick out their faults you could make a long and sorry list; but you know perfectly well that the faults were not the characteristic thing. The "good-will doing service" was characteristic and really determined what they were. So the Gospel has been put to the proof of Doing by others and must be proved by you if you would be a Christian.

Now comes a fourth step closely related to the third. The Gospel of Good-Will needs hearers, students, and doers. It also needs *Witnesses* who shall extend the knowledge of it. As a Christian you should be willing to be one of these.

When Jesus chose the Twelve He wanted friends and helpers as any one of us when face to face with a great enterprise might want them. These men heard, learned, and practiced the Gospel. But Jesus had a further use for their learning and doing. "Ye shall be my witnesses," He is reported to have said to them. Of course they had been witnessing to His goodness and their love of Him ever since they first joined His company. Now He desired them to become purposeful

witnesses who should make it a part of their life-work to go forth to tell men of the Way. In coming into the world the Good-Will of God embarked upon a great Adventure — the saving of men from selfishness, and saving them to a life that should be worth living forever. Jesus Christ, Who is but another name for the Good-Will of God, came to save you. But that saving process is never quite adequate or complete until the saved man is enlisted in extending the process which has saved him. Professor Drummond used to say that “no man is ever saved in his sleep.” An act of your will, which God and man must both respect as an ultimate force in the world, is required. And when your will is thus enlisted, it is expected

to carry you far enough to make a saving agency of you; you in turn are to become a partaker in Christ's Adventure. This is only fair. It is what the first disciples undertook when they became apostles and were sent out to spread the Good News.

Of course, the moment that you began to hear, some testimony was borne to the worth of the Gospel. When you began to study and learn, the weight of this testimony increased. As you went on to do, translating gospel truth into everyday goodness, the testimony became clear and convincing in very high degree. There is no testimony more convincing in the long run than that of the Doer. But the world is so constituted that when great news is abroad—news



that demands action—many people must be told by word of mouth. Even when convinced in their hearts that the news and its call are for them, they yet wait to be summoned to a decision. In every crisis in public affairs free men have to be dealt with face to face before their full service can be enlisted; education, books, and libraries can never take the place of the living teacher; and in religion, Andrew must still tell Peter that he has found the satisfaction of his soul's desire in Christ, and Peter must tell the multitude that by the love and sacrifice of Jesus they are to interpret the Father's Good-Will to them.

This is something that, looking ahead, you may shrink from doing. You have had no Christian experience

to boast about, you say. You cannot speak on street corners or address public meetings. Never fear. You will not be asked to do what you are not empowered to do; although you may be asked to do some things which you cannot do very well or can only do with difficulty, since it is true that the witness whose testimony is given with effort is often surprisingly convincing. In speaking about the deepest things of life, do not covet glibness or strive after it. Covet conviction and unselfish desire to do good and your testimony will always carry weight. But remember that this bearing of testimony by one man to his neighbor and by some apostolic men to groups of their fellows is a necessary means of spread-

ing a knowledge of the Way and leading people into it. Among all the themes that men discuss, none possesses a more lasting interest than Religion. He who can speak simply and with power of conviction upon it will never lack either a hearing or an influence. The true disciple will therefore feel an impulse to become an apostle. He will bear personal witness as best he can; he will support those agencies that help to instruct congregations and communities in religion; and he will feel something of the appeal made by the great adventure of Christian Missions.

### III

#### PROBLEMS OF THE WAY

##### 1. FAITH

THERE is an old story of a young man who had become a Christian and desired to become a communicant. On examination, he was asked what his experience had been; and answered that he expected to have his experience in the future. He was right, though his examiner was by no means wrong. Experience is a large word. The questioner wanted to know how the young man found the entrance to the Way; the candidate had in mind the adventures and problems of the Way itself. I am supposing that you have heard the invitation

to the Christian Life, given some thought to its meaning, and decided that this Life is to be yours; that you are trying to translate its truth into action, and that you desire to spread the Good News. If you have gone so far, you are unquestionably a Christian. But you have not yet had your deeper experiences of how good the Christian Life is or how rich its rewards are. Large problems are yet to be solved; the largest relating to Belief and Conduct, or Faith and Morals.

It may seem strange to some of you that the problems of Belief should be postponed to this third chapter instead of finding a place in the first. But the act of personal confidence which leads you into the company of

the Friends of Jesus Christ does not depend upon a system of belief; it depends rather upon your sense of sin or of need, and your feeling—in which conviction and hope are alike mingled—that Jesus Christ can meet it as He has met the need of others. But no sooner have you reached this point than you find that beliefs are necessarily involved. You find your friends believing thus and so; and instinctively compare their beliefs with your own. You find great Christian doctrines coming down through the ages. Some of these seem the most natural things in the world to you; they were, indeed, articles of your faith before you became a Christian. Others mean almost nothing to you; and when you are told that men have

borne persecution and even gone to death for the sake of them, you can only wonder. Altogether, if you are a thoughtful person, the question of What to Believe will present many problems. What are you going to do about it?

In the first place, do not think that you must believe exactly as your Christian neighbor believes in order to walk in the Way as his true friend and helper. It was not a dead level, but a living variety of experience and faith that Jesus wanted or He would never have chosen twelve such different men for his Apostles. You will find some people inclined to deny this. A few within the Christian Church and many without it insist that every Christian's views must du-



plicate those of his fellow or else one or the other is a pretender. These are the people who would also insist that a creed must always be an exact definition of religion instead of an attempt to express one's experience of religion. Some of these people pride themselves upon their orthodoxy and others upon their heterodoxy. Beware of both. Beware of anybody, indeed, who prides himself upon anything in the realm of Religion. The Way of Christ is for the humble-minded, and the boaster is never quite happy in it. You will not meet many to-day who boast of their orthodoxy; but the man who proclaims himself a "liberal" is on every street corner. To be liberal and graciously tolerant is an exceedingly good thing; but to

boast of the fact is, as a wise man remarked the other day, like proclaiming one's good looks or fine manners, an act of such shockingly bad taste as to throw immediate doubt upon the rightfulness of the claim. So do not let anybody persuade you that you must exactly duplicate either the experience or the faith of your neighbor in order to be a Christian yourself, or a member of the Church to which your neighbor belongs. Do not, on the other hand, multiply or exaggerate these differences of experience and faith. Insist upon your freedom here, but use that freedom constructively and for strengthening the common cause.

Again, in facing the problems of belief, do not join the company of

those who are always trying to boil faith down to its lowest terms—to find how little a man may believe and yet remain a Christian. The last two generations have shown a great many really earnest and conscientious people searching for an “irreducible minimum” of faith. In religion it has often seemed to be the rule to get rid of everything that was in any way open to criticism and to cling only to that with which nobody could find any fault or which had never been exaggerated or misused. There was a certain justification for this because of the exaggeration and misuse of many unimportant things. But the process went so far that these good people seemed like travelers who, on beginning a sea voyage, should eagerly

search their stores to see what they could throw overboard and still maintain life. One has scruples against tea and coffee; another never eats meat; cocoa fails to agree with a third; sugar is often misused; raisins are indigestible; fruit may decay and become poisonous; but life can unquestionably be supported for considerable periods upon bread and water. So overboard go the materials of a generous diet and all hands settle down to a quart of water and three ship's biscuits a day. This suffices to eke out an existence; but it is pitiably meager, without zest, energy, or efficiency.

The true Companion of the Way will spend very little time in whittling down his faith. He will be generous and hearty in desiring to learn and

believe as much instead of as little as he can. Does this seem like inviting superstition? It is really nothing of the kind. Curiously enough, it is the starved soul which often revolts against its regimen, and has recourse to wild superstitions, exactly as underfed bodies sometimes develop strange and unnatural appetites.

The Christian of generous habit will not try exactly to measure his own beliefs by those of any other person. He will take thankfully such faith as springs out of the experience God sends. But he will be highly sympathetic toward all those beliefs of others which have proved their capacity to mould and direct life. Even where this directing influence seems to him to have been unfortunate and

to make for distortion rather than true development, he will still study it with sympathy enough to see if it does not show a real need in man and at least a kernel of the truth adapted to meet that need. So when it comes to the use of ancient creeds, you will not, if you are a Christian of the generous type, think for a moment of throwing them overboard as so much useless lumber. There are well-meaning people who desire this, but they are usually people who need to think again. There also are people who would like to abolish the Constitution of the United States, the Senate, and the Supreme Court, because now and then one of these institutions seems to delay some pet reform of theirs. "These things taste of the Past," they

say, which to them is always a "dead Past." Their world is to get on to-day by a series of new little revolutions which are to have no relation to the processes and orbit of yesterday. But the world is not so made. It gets on by revolutions, to be sure, but these are part and parcel of the revolutions of yesterday. The Past, rightly considered, is living instead of dead, and the work of to-day and to-morrow cannot be adequately done without some knowledge of its experience. I am dwelling a little upon this because it is a rather unpopular truth, and one which, if you would have a healthful and really constructive life, it is highly important to consider. "Trees grow best in soil fertilized by their own leaves," runs the proverb. The better

faith of to-morrow will come not from despising, but from developing the faith of yesterday and to-day.

The great Creeds bind the living Past and the struggling Present together. They are sacred because they record the deeper needs and aspirations of an earlier day; and when we treat them as they ought to be treated, — not as definitions, but as symbols or attempts to express experience, — we discover that they represent very vital links in the processes of a living faith.

What, now, are the main articles of faith which the Church catholic — that is, the general and inclusive body of Christian people — has confessed? In answering that question I shall cite the Confession of Faith in a New Eng-



land Church which cherished the faith of the fathers and yet wished to express it in terms of to-day's experience so simply stated that an intelligent child under proper instruction could understand them:—

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Creator and Ruler of all things :

And in Jesus Christ, in Whom the love of God was so revealed that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life :

And in the Holy Ghost, as the Indwelling Spirit of Truth :

And in the Forgiveness of Sin, through Repentance and Faith :

And in the Holy Scriptures, as revealing the Way of Eternal Life :

And in one Church of the Redeemed on earth and in heaven ; and in one Baptism for the remission of sins ; and in one Communion of Saints :

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And we look for the Resurrection of the Dead, and the Life Everlasting.

Amen.

The phrase which introduces these articles of belief is, you see, "We believe in," instead of, "We believe that," and the difference is much more than a mere play on words. Religion takes only a secondary account of the things which we believe as mere historic facts or philosophic theories, though these are often important; but it takes immediate account of the persons and things which we believe *in* for the guidance of life. I shall illustrate this further as we go on.

It would be quite absurd, for instance, to attempt to define God—that is, to say all that can be said about an Infinite Person; or to write

such a description of Him as would cause Him to be known perfectly by another. We cannot define a man or a child in any such way as this. There is something about a person that refuses to be crowded into definitions. But we can put down in black and white at least a portion of our experience of persons — our need of them, our affection for them, and the sort of persons we have found them to be.

So in the present case. Where does your experience of God begin? If you believe in God at all, what aspect or manifestation of God do you believe in? In all probability your faith in God begins with a belief in the Holy Ghost, the Indwelling Spirit of Truth. You may very likely dissent strongly from this statement. You

are much more certain of your belief in a Heavenly Father and in Jesus Christ than in the Holy Spirit. Indeed, this article of the Church's faith has very likely seemed quite dim and mysterious to you. But think again. Is it not true that among your deepest experiences are those which have to do with truth and falsehood, right and wrong? The moral law within, although you have never thought much about it, is a great reality as well as a great mystery. It is really there, and as you began your conscious life, a something that said "ought" and "ought not," "right" and "wrong," began to be your companion. In so far as you have had this experience you have tested for yourself the presence of a Spirit of Truth in the world.

Wise men will tell you that these feelings about right and wrong are echoes of the experience of your grandparents and great-grandparents; and there is weight in what they say. But it still remains true that the impulse which men and women have toward truth and right is of the nature of a personal influence. We believe in this impulse. We know it is here to-day; that it will be here to-morrow stronger than ever before; that men in general cannot shake it off; and that the way to peace lies in accepting its guidance and authority. Remember that in expressing our faith here we are not trying to define all that this Spirit of Truth may be. We are simply acknowledging our experience of right and wrong and our be-

lief in and purpose to trust the Spirit of Truth.

But as we go about among believing people, and as we look back upon the experience of the race, we hear and see much that relates to Jesus Christ. We read His words and some episodes of His life in the New Testament. We discover that He had an extraordinary sense of the nearness and intimacy of this Spirit of Goodness and Truth of which we have just been speaking. He had a unique sense of His own oneness with God; so that He thought and spoke of God as His Father and as a God of Love.

From Jesus the men about Him caught this idea of God as their Father, a God of love and righteousness, until they began to form their lives

upon that idea. They began, that is, to translate its truth into goodness. Men had believed in God before; but it was in a tribal or a national god or in a galaxy of gods. Now, looking through the eyes of Christ, they began to see that the true object of their faith was a Universal Father and that His name is Love.

In this sense we believe in Jesus Christ as revealing God to us. But, beyond this, we are forced to note the way in which He dealt with sin. Some people have tried to get rid of sin by ignoring it. Jesus, on the contrary, recognized it to be one of the most outstanding facts of life. Others, who have admitted its great place in experience, have been so hopeless about it as to become hard and cynical. "It

might as well be admitted," said a brilliant writer of the last century, "that there is no cure for a bad heart." Jesus again made it the burden of His preaching and living that there *was* a cure for a bad heart; and He died to effect that cure. Just now we are not concerned with "a scheme of salvation" and shall not discuss questions relating to it. I only observe that your belief in Jesus Christ does not depend upon a philosophy of His person or work, but upon a fact of experience. That fact is that Jesus Christ's method of dealing with sin appears to work. Sin is a fact of life which wise men will recognize. It seems to come from a heart that is under the dominion of a wrong choice, or from an unchastened physical desire, or a pervading



selfishness, or from all three, since they often merge into one another. He said that when by a great choice of the right a person turned from evil, the dominion of evil could be broken and he become a free man again. If a man were sorry for the wrong of the past, repaired so far as he could the evil he had done, and became a man of active good-will, then he should become a good man, his sins should be forgiven, and he should find peace instead of unrest; in short, he should be saved. This has proved to be true in experience.

St. Peter was a rather rough friend of Jesus who, when his loyalty was tested, failed to meet the test. He denied his friend from fear and confusion. It was wrong, and the wrong

was brought home to him by the look of his Master. But there proved to be a way out of his disloyalty. He was sorry; he took the experience to heart, as we say; and the result was that the generous but over-confident nature of the man was chastened and sweetened into serviceableness. He was restored and made efficient. John Bunyan was a youth of unusual sensibility to religious and anti-religious influence. It is not necessary to take his own statement of his sinfulness too literally, sincere though he was in making it. The thing that is abundantly clear is that he was lost in the sense of not having any clear and practicable way of life to follow, or any peace to enjoy. Then he tried the Way of trusting and following Jesus Christ as well

as he could discern it. The result was unmistakable. He found forgiveness, direction, peace, and adequacy to very hard conditions of life — that is, instead of being lost in the world, he was saved. Moreover, he developed a marvelous efficiency in helping other people. He became not only a world-famous Pilgrim, but a Great-Heart who guided other pilgrims through.

A notable example of the success of the method of Jesus Christ is often cited in the case of a certain Jerry Macaulay, who, having been "saved" from the tyranny of drink and other vices, became a recognized power in saving men who had sunk so low as to abandon hope. They repented, enlisted among the friends of Jesus Christ, found peace in that friendship,

and walked in the Way. There is no denying the fact. The method of Jesus "worked" in these notable cases, as it has done in a multitude of less-known lives. It always seems to work when it is fairly tried. And when the Church confesses its faith "in Jesus Christ through Whom the love of God was so revealed that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life," it means just this: that Christians trust Christ's way of dealing with sin. If you believe that repentance, forgiveness, faith, and active good-will will save men from sin, then you believe in Jesus Christ as a Saviour, since that is His Way; and you still believe in Him, even though your philosophical theories about Him and

some of your historical estimates of the story of His earthly life may differ from the theories and estimates of your fellows.

You will see how naturally this experience of a Spirit of Truth and Goodness and of a Saviour from sin leads us up to trust in a God Who loves men. The Christian's idea of God is won from Jesus Christ. Do not be in the least disturbed when people say that this idea of God as a Father was in the world before New Testament times. Of course it was. God has ever been true to Himself and His children have always been catching glimpses of His nature. Cloudy as the so-called heathen and pagan faiths were, there were rifts in their skies through which the light of

life shone. It is also true that many of the great rules of Christian living were suggested before Jesus gave them their present shape, and for the same reason. The early Chinese saying, "Do not to another what you would not have him do to you" is like a foretaste of the Golden Rule, except—and this is noteworthy—that it is negative and cautious whereas the great command of Jesus is positive and adventurous. It was in Christianity that this idea of God as a living and saving Father became regnant.

In becoming a Christian you are not asked to accept a philosophy or a set of definitions, but a Way of Life. Jesus Christ asks you to live as though there were a Father in Heaven to care for you, a Saviour to reveal that Fa-

ther's love, and a Spirit of Goodness and Truth to keep life sweet and whole. He says that whoever makes this adventure or experiment of life shall find out for himself whether the doctrine is true. This is an approach to the Christian life which any reasonable man may make. It is fair and friendly. It involves no self-contradiction, and no disgrace of the reason, nor does it ask a man to believe what he cannot believe. It does ask for an act of the will, a choice which shall align a man with those who through the generations have been striving for wholeness of life, abiding peace, and the reign of righteousness.

The remaining clauses in our Confession may be more briefly dealt with because their essence is contained in

those already discussed. We believe that repentance and faith with all that they imply will heal a soul of sin — not merely by drowning uncomfortable memories, but by establishing a new basis of living and by cleansing the springs of action.

We believe in the Bible, and we refuse to be drawn into unprofitable argument as to just what parts are played in it by history, annals, parable, poetry, or legend. All may be serviceable. The thing about the Bible that interests us is that it reveals the Way. One man may think the Book of Jonah to be a history and his neighbor may regard it as a very appealing and beautiful apologue which is like a foregleam of the New Testament shining out of the midst of the Old.



If these are wise men their discussion of the problem may be both interesting and profitable; but it is not likely to touch the real worth of the Bible to you and me. Our question is whether or not the Bible points out a practicable and hopeful way of life. The Old Testament may be said to hinge upon the Ten Commandments and the faith of the Prophets; the New Testament upon the Law of Love as proclaimed in the life, death, and words of Jesus Christ. We are sure that every man who guides his faith and conduct upon these lines will develop a life fit to outlast death. We are sure that abiding worth lies in that direction. So whatever may be your views about the authorship of Bible books or the nature of Biblical inspiration,

you may be sure that if you accept the Way as marked out in Scripture, you have in your possession the really vital thing.

In like manner we believe in one Church made up of believing and trusting people who follow the Way. They are called by many names,—altogether too many names,—but the Master of the Way is patient and He does not deny His followers because they too often insist upon special names and signs. It is better to be imperfectly and awkwardly organized than not to be organized at all. Our Confession of Faith recognizes and emphasizes this need of organization. It is useless in this day when efficiency and coöperation are so emphasized to labor the point. Christian

people need one another for common worship and for common effort. They are Christians not simply to save their own souls, but also for the sake of the Kingdom and Community of God. They are asked to confess their faith—to stand up and be counted upon faith's side in the great exigencies of life; and they are asked to co-operate for the ends of the Kingdom. This means the formation of a visible Church.

It is unavoidable, men being what they are, that some forms should pertain to the organization and worship of the Church. Two Sacraments have come down through the ages, both in themselves of high significance and great simplicity. One is Baptism which takes the common cleansing

use of water to signify our washing from sin through repentance and faith; the other is the Lord's Supper which figures forth our belonging together. Both may be said to signify our union with Christ, one upon the negative and the other upon the positive side. In Baptism we separate ourselves with Him from defilement, and in the Lord's Supper we sit down with His family and are fed upon His Grace. Some are no doubt repelled by the Sacraments, partly by a distaste for all symbols or forms, and partly because they fail to see the inner meaning of them and to realize what means of grace they have proved to be. Enlightened Christians do not treat them as watchwords or countersigns which a believer must use or

else utterly forfeit the divine favor. God is not that kind of a taskmaster. On the other hand, the Church recognizes the part played by symbols in all human intercourse. Our ordinary civilities of bowing, shaking hands, uncovering when we enter a house or church are all symbolic. So are our marriage ceremonies, our oaths of allegiance, and our flags. The great symbols are made up of simple elements, and it is a part of common courtesy, to say no more, to respect these. None are simpler or more universal than the use of water to signify cleansing, and the breaking bread together as members of one Family on Earth and in Heaven, for whose sustenance provision has been made through the spending of flesh and

blood by its Head. There are some sacrifices which a man should stand ready to make for the common cause. If you shrink from all use of form and symbol, consider whether you are not called upon here by common courtesy toward God and your fellow-Christians to use these accepted symbols of the Church's unity. On the other hand, if you delight in symbols, beware how you elaborate the form of these Sacraments or speak of them as though they were ends in themselves. They are means of grace, not ends. And many who have used them reverently have found them to be means of such power that the sense of the merely symbolic has been lost in a conscious union with the divine. Do not strain or hurry toward such a

consummation. Just follow the Way, putting the means which the Way offers to their best use and larger experience will come.

The final article in our Confession of Faith relates to a future life. With a perversity as baffling as it is human good people have insisted upon emphasizing the incidental and neglecting the essential here. Men who were Christians and others who were not have tried to define the Christian's belief in life after death as though it were made up of a great many dogmatic assertions about Heaven, Hell, Purgatory, and the circumstances of the soul's existence after it has left the body. The fact is that the Bible is not specific in regard to these things. It is not the province of the Bible to

answer our curious questions, even when they are dictated by the heart. Jesus said relatively little about life in a future Heaven or Hell, though He seems to have thought and said much about a future life upon the earth under conditions which would make the earth a true Kingdom of God. It is a mistake to make Christianity a religion of other-worldliness as though it taught that all a man need care for was the plucking of his own soul like a brand from the burning. Some people here and there may have so regarded it. There have been periods in Christian history when interest in the future tended to distract men from duty in the present. But the normal appeal of Christianity has been to men who were on pilgrimage out



of the Past into the Future with the Present ever with them. It has been a generous appeal, and it has been made in the expectation that a fair and generous interpretation should be put upon its terms.

This is particularly true of the doctrine of the Future Life. Christianity here as elsewhere is a Way. In becoming a Christian you are asked to live on the principle that life is stronger than death; that there is something in a good life which bodily decay cannot reach, which shall survive separation from the body, and which shall be worthy to be clothed upon with some new organ of self-expression, that shall do for it to-morrow after death what the physical frame does to-day.

There are many reasons for this faith. In some form or other, grotesque or beautiful, it is almost universal among men. It seems necessary to life unless we are to be put to serious mental and moral confusion. It suits the genius of creative and adventurous man that he should finally attain what his life needs. In particular the life of Jesus Christ illustrated this faith. He had a splendid ideal of saved men in a saved world. He was defeated again and again in his attempt to make men see and accept it. At last He met a cruel and shameful death while pushing this attempt. His enemies thought Him disposed of. His friends were of the same opinion. Their hopes, plans, and incipient organization were all in ruins.

Then somehow they became convinced that their Master had not been conquered by death after all. They were conscious of His living presence with them. As they reflected upon it they began to feel that a life so hid with God, the source of all life, could not die. In a world where many men were baffled and confused by death, they got their bearings, steered a brave and progressive course, and fulfilled the earthly portion of their careers by means of this faith. Men have been doing that ever since. It has not made them weak or ineffective. They have been strengthened and made more efficient in so far as they have thought of themselves as responsible agents, set here to write in character and action one chapter of their ca-

reers, to take good fortune and ill not merely with composure, but with gallant determination to make use of both, and to face death as a summons to a new field of service and adventure.

Such are the main articles of the Christian's faith. Their truth cannot be proved by sheer force of logic as a theorem in geometry is proved. Its appeal is to life. It opens a Way of Salvation—that is, of Mastery over Circumstance. If you have faith and courage enough to choose this Way for your own and to declare your choice by word and life, you are a Christian.

## IV

### PROBLEMS OF THE WAY

#### 2. CONDUCT

THE last chapter dealt with the faith of the Christian, not as a set of dogmas, but as a principle of life. Faith feeds conduct and conduct strengthens faith. To say which comes first is like asking whether the seed is due to the plant or whether the plant is due to the seed. In practical experience we find both to be true. We find some plants offering their fruits to us. Here the plant comes first. On the other hand, because we love growing things for their own sakes or because we feel some obligation to other people, we put good seed into the earth and

see plants of our sowing grow from them. It is a cycle of experience as beautiful as it is endless. So some men are won to faith by seeing its good fruit in other lives; and others, feeling the need of faith to lighten their way and make life whole, claim it, and the good fruits follow as naturally as the woods grow green in May or the garden ripens in August. It is vain to discuss the precise order of this progress. God seems to like wealth and variety of experience and permits His children to begin their vital acquaintance with Him at various points in the cycle. But if the acquaintance be real, the cycle will repeat itself. "Faith without works is dead," said the New Testament writer. Your belief is worth just so much as the wholeness of life it

produces. Faith is a claim which the soul makes upon truth. But it is not a lifeless grasp ; it is a vital connection. True faith is a grasp of truth in order to do something with it ; and the thing that the human soul can do with truth is to turn it into goodness. Not all people know truth when they see it or have any appetite for it when it is known. Truth which has not passed through the laboratory of a human life is in some respects like "raw" nitrogen in the air. Tons of atmospheric nitrogen rest upon every acre of many a barren field whose chief need is nitrogen. Yet the field, though it has need of this food, has no capacity to receive it. Let certain plants be sown there, however, which have the happy gift of absorbing nitrogen and concentrating

it in a form adapted to the soil's digestion, and the field improves. Without any taste for raw nitrogen, even when in closest contact with it, the lean earth understands and profits eagerly by the form which nitrogen takes when wrought over into the substance of crimson clover.

So there are many people who care little about the law of gravitation as a statement of general truth. They care almost nothing about the fact that sixteen ounces make a pound. But when some man, using the law of gravitation, makes a just scale and sells them goods by means of it, carefully and as a matter of conscience giving them a full sixteen ounces to every pound, then the truth becomes vital. Every normal man understands it, has an appetite for



it, and calls such behavior, goodness. He is at once more inclined to truth which is capable of such transformation, and to the human soul by whom the transformation is effected.

Such a translation of divine truth into goodness was the mission of Jesus Christ. Men had caught glimpses of the fact that they had a Father in Heaven who loved them. In the life and death of Jesus they saw this goodwill of God translated into the service of men. Christianity is a continuation of that Way. The Christian man is expected to carry on the work of Jesus, not by trying to do exactly what Jesus did in the first century, but, as has already been indicated, by taking the spirit and endeavor of Jesus into his life in the present, and turning the

truth of to-day into twentieth-century goodness.

How is this to be done ? By applying the principle of good-will to the roots and springs of action. There is a morality of form, an outward decorum, which is on the whole a valuable asset of society. It is disgraceful to pick a man's pocket. It is mannerly and amiable to go out of one's way to show an inquiring traveler his road. These are things that a person will avoid or do, in proportion as he has been well trained in the customs of society ; and the customs of society in these respects are good. To deride them is a cheap and easy way of gaining notoriety ; but it usually indicates a mind that is not only shallow, but narrow as well. Custom, however, even

when it is good custom, does not satisfy the demands of the Way. The goodness of the Christian is an interpretation of the divine good-will. A man may refrain from stealing because the chance of detection and punishment is too great. This is good as far as it goes; but it clearly does not go very far in the direction of society's safety, and it does not promise any advance at all toward society's redemption. It is the morality of fear. Another man may refrain from stealing because to pick a pocket would outrage his own self-respect. In the popular (and mistaken) use of the word he would not so "demean" himself as to do such a thing. This attitude represents an advance upon its predecessor because here honesty has

become a vital thing so far as the feeling of self-respect is real, although its life may be a rather feeble one rooted in thin soil. The third man, with another's pocket wide open before him and feeling himself to be beyond chance of detection, will not steal because he considers his neighbor. He can see the man's chagrin, perhaps his anxiety deepening into pain, upon realizing the loss with his consequent inability to pay his bills or purchase needed supplies. Because money is the symbol of real value, there is no sentimentality in the pathos attaching to a poor man's desolation upon losing it. One who loves his fellow-men in a Christian way cannot do anything that would inflict such sorrow upon them or so outrage their plain rights. Even

supposing that the loss would never be discovered by the owner, this same principle constitutes a man his brother's keeper, and if a neighbor's possessions are observed to be in danger, he at once becomes their guardian ; he restores them to their owner, and he neither accepts nor desires anything beyond such a moderate and just reward as shall compensate his time and effort. Here the element of true self-respect comes in. He is a brother in Christ's family, and it behooves him to behave brotherly. Perhaps the great phrase, "God created man in his own image," runs through his head, and he realizes as never before that he must not let that fair reflection of the divine be marred or defaced by his behavior.

This man sums up in himself the

three motives for honest conduct. He has ordinary prudence; but this fear of detection if he steal or cheat is a reserve which is never called up because it is not needed. He has self-respect, but knows that the truer self-respect is, the less likely its possessor is to push it to the front as though he were proud of its possession. The thing that really weighs with him and carries the day without recourse to lesser motives is his love of God and fellow-man. He thus becomes a man not merely of literal honesty, but of instinctive honor. His conduct has a universal significance and can be taken over as a rule for the world's life. His spirit is such that, whatever the circumstances, he will prove a translator of truth into goodness. This

is the type of character which Christ's Way develops; and it is the sort of conduct by which His Kingdom grows. It is the outcome of the Mind of Christ.

You will see how close is the application of this Spirit of the Way to the guidance of life. Here, for instance, is the field of conduct upon which the sexes meet. How shall one behave there? The Mosaic Law established many concrete rules in regard to the behavior of men toward women. These rules were in general so admirable as to lift Hebrew conduct to a plane very much higher than that of the surrounding nations and to give to Israel a correspondingly secure hold upon life; for it is true of nations as of individuals that the ways of impu-

rity are ways of weakness and death. But Jesus was not content with these rules of Moses. A man might keep the letter of them all and yet fail to be a man of wholesome life. Here, as elsewhere, Jesus applied His rule of good-will in action. The fact of sex is of course fundamental in life and should be so recognized by young and old without hesitation or prudishness. The natural instinct of sex which attracts male and female to each other is an equally fundamental fact of society. In its raw and unregulated form it produces untold misery and degrades men to a level which sometimes seems to drop below that of the brutes. Touched with honor, on the other hand, this same instinct develops many of the most gracious traits of



which men are capable. Loyalty, self-sacrifice, the understanding heart, and love stronger than death are all among the fruits of the Spirit grown on this field.

How is the true Companion of the Way to regulate his conduct here? He is to try to be a constructive instead of a divisive and dissipating influence. He will try to build up instead of to undermine the House of Life. No set of mere rules will enable him to do this, though rules will sometimes help. Good-will in action—good-will that has its springs in the love of God and that reaches to the depths of the man's heart—holds the secret. That good-will leads him to respect the sources and processes of life. He cannot make these things the subjects of

light conversation or the butt of cheap jokes. In all matters of sex he will be as frank and straightforward as need requires, while at the same time he is modest and surrounds the whole business with a decent reserve. In recent years much has been said and written about "sex-hygiene." It is wise and right that young people should be instructed in regard to the mystery of sex and their conduct toward it. But beware of the people, young and old alike, who are always harping upon this theme. All that needs to be said can be said simply and briefly; and this having been done it is well to drop the subject. Grave mischief may result from dwelling upon such themes or continually suggesting them; and a subtle poison is sometimes distilled

into the minds of teacher and pupil both by undue emphasis upon questions of sex. Of late this subject has occupied an altogether disproportionate place in novel, essay, and drama. The world seems to have gone sex-mad; and if one lifts his voice in remonstrance against the exaggeration of this topic, he will very likely be told that he is a prude or else afraid to face the facts of life. Do not fear that charge. The truth is that the remonstrants here are very far from being prudes. They believe right heartily in calling a spade a spade when necessity arises, and being done with it. But they do not believe in calling a spade a spade for the love of it and for the curiosity it arouses. This dwelling upon sexual themes is itself a form

of excess. It belongs to night and the shadows, instead of to sunlight and the wholesome day; and sometimes it brings woeful consequences in its train. "Avoid sensuality," said Cicero; "for if you yield to it you will be unable to think of anything else." That sort of semi-insanity, more often found outside asylums than within them, that holds the mind tyrannously to matters of sex, is the lot of such as refuse to practice a decent reserve not only before others, but with themselves. The secret of good taste, sound health, and right conduct here is purity of heart; and however strong the sex-instinct, purity of heart can be cultivated as well as other useful crops even when beset with weeds.

We ought not to tolerate sugges-

tive stories; to possess or spread abroad suggestive prints; or to patronize plays and moving pictures that require sacrifice of decency or common modesty for their production. There are extremes of dress that plainly appeal to man's lower curiosity; fashions in magazine covers and in cheap stories that could have no reason for being except the hope that the sexual interest they arouse will extend their sale. It is right and proper that the authorities should deal with the more flagrant of these offenses. But no public officer can meet the need here. Educated and wholesome good taste that is as far from prudishness on the one hand as it is from lasciviousness on the other is needed; and Christian good-will must supply the motive.

Christian good-will dictates self-restraint and a true respect for the purity of the life of others. You may be puzzled sometimes by voices which cry out against the "conventions" of society as though they were all bad and true freedom were to be won only in setting them at naught. That sort of talk is as easy as it is shallow. Its only chance of a hearing consists in the fact that there are so many people whose prejudices are easily aroused and whose minds are erratic and unsure in their working. The true "conventions" of society are the things agreed upon in the light of experience by people who are trying to live together in peace and mutual helpfulness. They are the habits of society. Some are sound and good; some bad

and insincere. The great established standards of purity and decency are in the former class. They make for social and individual health and peace. Do not let any cheap talk about Mrs. Grundy and her censorship shake your allegiance to the things that are pure, lovely, and of good report. The best way of getting rid of insincere conventions is to exalt and practice the conventions that are sound. The cant of mere unconventionality helps very little if at all.

You cannot go very far along the Christian Way to-day without facing some aspect of the "Social Question." You will spend some money. I hope that you will earn some. You will, also, I hope, be employed by some individual or group among your fel-

lows; and you are pretty certain in turn, either as an individual or as a member of a group, to employ others. Because a great deal of getting property has been greedy and much of its spending wasteful; because employers are sometimes selfish and employees dishonest, you will hear it said that it is impossible for a Christian to hold private property or for employers or employees to walk together in the Christian Way. I do not believe this. But neither do I believe in simply dismissing these hard sayings about society with a contemptuous remark that they are socialistic — as if that answered the real questions that they raise. Such questions are very serious and far-reaching. Those of you who are just entering active life are



likely to find them brought home to you with an emphasis at which your grandparents would have wondered and which the most far-sighted of your parents could scarce have foreseen. It does not seem to me likely that a day will come when the ownership of private property will cease, because the control of substance is a form of responsibility which so agrees with the idea of manhood that manhood may be said to need it. So we may hope that the relation of employer and employed may not cease; because the training of master and servant is so good for everybody that everybody ought to learn both to command and to obey. But I hasten to add that the exclusive control of vast stores of substance by one man, while multitudes

have nothing, is so far from ideal that it is not wholesome ; and that when the rich use their substance vainly and extravagantly their wealth becomes a positive menace to society. So while employers think of the men who take their wages merely as "hands" representing nothing but a capacity for so much work, they are certainly out of the Way of Christ ; not only out of it themselves, but blocking the entrance against such as might come in. And quite as truly the wage-earner, when he agitates for class legislation or joins his fellows to close the way of advancement against some ambitious boy unless the boy will join his union or wear his badge, or strikes with a view to using public distress to gain his private ends, is equally out of the Way. Both

under these circumstances are lending the creative and directive powers of a man to ill-will instead of to good-will. So common is this and so long continued are many of these unbrotherly and vexatious practices that it is little wonder if men sometimes cry out for a clean wiping of the slate and a new start in the history of society.

But that is not the way of progress. Our life together is a problem and a discipline. By degrees some elements of the problem are always being solved, some steps in the discipline are being profitably learned. This progress goes on wherever any man patiently and as a matter of principle brings good-will into action. Wherever this brotherly man appears his fellows see that the distressing nightmare of the Social Prob-

lem is, as Professor Peabody has said, after all, only the sum of a great many social problems, some of which he is solving. If he is rich, he is perceived to be not a man of money, but a man of means, and the means are kept at work toward good ends. If he is poor, poverty does not enslave, degrade, or embitter him. He insists upon being a man of serviceable good-will in spite of it; and in a multitude of instances he beautifully succeeds as those of us who have done much work among the poor can testify. Employers are by no means always selfish and grasping: employees are by no means always jealous or grudging. Still, in multitudes of cases, despite industrial wars and their rumors, this relation of employer and employed is to the advantage of both

sides and issues in mutual respect and friendship. It works when men are fair to one another and bring good-will into daily action.

What, now, shall be the conduct of the Christian in these circumstances? Whether he have much substance or little, he is to remember that it represents some one's toil in combination with the forces and resources of nature. It is so far forth sacred and must be used constructively, not frittered away upon mere frivolity. If he is an employer he must pay fair wages, see to it that safe and wholesome conditions surround his employees, not merely consent to, but work for, such plans for compensation, insurance, and the proper division of profits as shall give peace of mind and hope in the future as

well as present bodily welfare to those who take his wage; and he should do this, not as a matter of patronage or condescension, for these poison the springs of good-will, but out of the respect which he bears to them as his fellow-men and out of his recognition of their "stake" in his business; since the thing into which a man puts his vital energy, whether of brain or muscle, he must have as real a share in as the man who puts in money.

But this sharing of profit and privilege involves responsibility which only the employee who brings to his task good-will as well as skill or strength is likely to recognize. The bane of the labor union to-day is not its struggle for existence, but its ambition to dominate society in its own

interests. As a Christian you should take a deep and sympathetic interest in the struggle which the workmen of a century ago made for the right to combine and to improve their condition. It is often pathetic and sometimes tragic. As a Christian you must take an equal interest in the struggle as it still goes on. You will often find it hard to know exactly where to stand; for labor unions have grown rich and powerful. Like rich and powerful combinations of capital they incline to be tyrannous and to fight for dominion rather than right. Wherever ill-will and bitterness are sown because leaders find them to be convenient weapons your course is clear. Ill-will is wrong. And wherever you find a tendency in yourself to exag-

gerate the faults of the labor union so as to breed prejudice against it your course is again clear. Ill-will is still wrong. Good-will, on the other hand, is always right and will finally prove its ability to solve the multitude of social problems of which the Social Problem is composed. Of course this good-will is no mere soft and unctuous sentiment. It is a deep conviction or attitude of life that leads a man to see things as they are whether they seem for him or against him, and enlists his influence upon the side of that which is fair and brotherly whether it involve his own immediate gain or loss. That good-will is abroad in the world. It is safe to say that more people who own property are feeling its possession and use to be a matter of con-



science than ever before; and that more employers of labor are perceiving the responsibilities of their position than ever before and recognizing the rightful partnership of their employees. But the world has still a great way to go in this direction. This, however, is the tack upon which society is sailing just now in its slow and zigzag progress against the winds of circumstance; and I have dealt at unusual length with this aspect of Christian conduct, because it is here that there is a special call for that divine goodwill in action which must save the world.

This same Spirit of Christ must animate your choice of a profession or calling in life, your amusements, your service in the Church, and your

setting up of a home. The great professions deal primarily with people and their service, instead of with things and one's own gain. According to their loyalty to this ideal they are held in honor and confer honor upon those who follow them. The really serviceable physician, clergyman, teacher, or lawyer may or may not make a generous living; but he is pretty sure to develop a generous life and to be held in grateful honor by many people, because he has helped them in ignorance, perplexity, or suffering. He has been a constructive force in the common life, his goodwill proves to be contagious, and happily long survives his own bodily presence. This sort of thing is to be sought in choosing a life-work and

the Christian will consider the constructive quality of his calling. A thing that needs to be emphasized, however, is that these same high qualities belong to many other modes of livelihood that are too little esteemed. It is the fashion to speak slightly of the retail merchant, for instance, as though he were peculiarly liable to a sordid mind. In fiction the grocer may be said to represent a recognized type. He may be decent; possibly respectable; but scarcely generous and honorable. It is a cynical and altogether unworthy conclusion. The selling of butter, eggs, and flour is not an exalted business; but it is a highly necessary one, and when long and honestly continued it develops men worthy of honor. There are opportu-

nities for petty cheating in such a business. Some men yield to their temptation; but many other men do not. They serve their customers and many of them go beyond the bounds of safety in serving the poor. It is the part of the Christian to use a wise and generous independence in estimating the worth of such work.

Especially is this true when we approach the great fundamental callings that furnish our homes and tables. The carpenter, the mason, the fisherman, and above all the farmer, with their corps of manual helpers, represent an indispensable element in society whose worth needs a new appraisal in the light of Christ's Law of Love. Every one of us ought to do some manual labor, not merely for necessary exer-

cise, but for our manhood's sake. The moment we begin it in earnest two things happen. A new understanding of the men who do this work all the time begins to dawn upon us together with a heightened good-will toward them; and at the same time we realize how great a store of real skill and learning many of them have acquired. The successful farmer in particular, who keeps his land up, raises a variety of crops by means of elements which he can only partly control, feeds his family and helps to feed the world, is often a really learned man, at whose feet any one of us might profitably sit; and not infrequently he is a man with notable gifts of shrewd judgment and pungent speech into the bargain. I count it to be one of

the happy characteristics of my own calling that it has brought me into intimate association with all sorts and conditions of men in town and country both. Among these as life has gone on, I have set increasing store by acquaintance with men who worked with their hands as well as their heads and worked in the elemental materials of earth and water. They have taught me much; their society, and I hope it may be added, their friendship, has proved to be a never-failing delight; and the sense of their individual and collective worth has deepened my respect for my fellow-men. The Christian who really wants to know the value and power of good-will in the world will follow his Master in cultivating the friendship of plain men.

On the other hand, he will avoid any effort to exploit or take unfair advantage of them. No way of getting a living which dissipates human energy or takes advantage of human ignorance is worthy of a Christian. The saloon-keeper, for instance, may himself seem to be a kind-hearted and even a considerate man. The fact remains that he is depending for his income upon an appetite for strong drink among his fellows which is generally unfortunate and often highly vicious. He may say that he serves his neighbors. But it is not a constructive service. It dissipates their money and their energies; and in a multitude of cases it intensifies their already diseased appetite until they are its almost helpless slaves. This is

an extreme case; but the principle involved governs a multitude of other cases. The man who gets a large commission for selling cheap goods, or who takes advantage of the instinct of adventure in his neighbor to lead him into dubious speculation, is just as truly dissipating his resources and proving a traitor to the Fellowship of the Way. No business in which one man's gain must be another's loss is worthy of a Christian. Coöperation, instead of cut-throat competition, is the rule of brotherhood. Hence, all quackery that uses insincere means to gain business is to be avoided, not only because it is liable to cheat one's fellow-men, but because it introduces distrust and cynicism into society and tends to degrade great and useful pro-



fessions. The quack is generally a person who takes advantage of another's inexperience or distress to make money out of him while pretending to render some valuable service. Here, for instance, is the traveling doctor who stops for a day or two in a place. His advent is announced in the local paper, very likely with his portrait and a sensational picture of the examination of a patient by his "X-ray" machine. The whole thing is so crude that it would seem laughable to well-instructed people were it not for its real appeal to multitudes of the sick and ignorant. They know that very remarkable investigations are made by means of these machines; they are quite unable to see the patent absurdities in this man's picture of its use,

but are impressed by his glibness, give him their confidence and money, and he departs to reap other fields. His real stock in trade is his own effrontery and the sorrows of his neighbors.

From time to time my desk is deluged with the advertisements of a so-called evangelist who is trying to sell land in a southern state. The plan of a "city" to be called by the promoter's name; of a "university" whose president has already been chosen, although the school itself has nothing to show beyond a tract of undeveloped land; and all the accepted paraphernalia of the "get-rich-quick" schemers are there. But most dreadful is the advertisement of this man's success as a preacher—the "souls that have been saved" under his min-

istry — as a guaranty of his business. Even if one were to grant that his land is all that he claims it to be, the fact would still remain that it is an intolerable thing for any true preacher of the Gospel to advertise his success and use it to promote the sale of commodities. The whole thing rings false and illustrates anew how closely allied are loose morals and bad taste. Such means, no doubt, sometimes yield dollars; but they are won at a bitter cost. The pettifogging lawyer who stirs up strife and urges damage suits in order that he may skim the cream from the awards, gives another instance of a livelihood won by using men with their sorrows, hopes, and sometimes their hates as pawns in a sordid game. The Companion of the

Way will have no part in all this. He will be too loyal to Jesus Christ and to the Fellowship of believing souls to exploit anybody's ignorance or need; and if he cannot live by other means than these, he can at least die — a consummation far more devoutly to be wished than a life sustained by unbrotherly means.

## V

### PROBLEMS OF THE WAY

#### 3. "MAKING ONE'S SOUL"

"To make one's soul" is a phrase we owe to the French. It is a good phrase because it emphasizes the responsibility of every man to keep the lamp of the Spirit alight in his life. One of the sorry things in your experience is likely to be the sight of some man of generous impulse in his youth shrinking and hardening in his age. He may continue to be a man of correct outward habit; but he ceases to be responsive to the appeal of life except along a very narrow front which is occupied by a few personal appetites or interests. This is

especially noticeable in the case of a certain type of college man, who, after showing large promise in college days, grows cynical and selfish with the years. He is, not infrequently, a successful man as the world estimates success; but the success has often been won along the lines of mere money-making, or by pushing his personal interests athwart the paths of his fellows and of society at large. He may conceivably give money to good causes; but he no longer has hopes, enthusiasms, generous sympathies, or personal services to give. The trouble is not so much that he has been a "bad" man as that he has failed to feed his soul.

Now, as life goes on and as the crust or callus of habit tends to make

us less responsive to impulse from without, it is increasingly important that the best of these impulses should have allies within. Where those allies are active and well equipped, life keeps its zest. Often, indeed, its last days are its best days. I cannot remember to have seen a teacher, missionary, or physician actively devoted to the higher interests of his calling who ever despaired of his world. One of the curious things about well-equipped missionaries who live among backward peoples is, that while they are almost uniquely informed about the frailties, perversities, and sins of these peoples, they always show an affection for them and a confidence in their development that is far more than merely professional. The man

whom you serve may be very low down in the human scale; but he not only seems "worth while" to you; he deepens the life of your soul and lends interest to your world. However hard his case or vexatious his problems, life is bound to remain interesting so long as you continue to give attention to them. You may deal with the ugly only to find your sense of beauty heightened; and with the somber only to discover that the springs of humor flow more plentifully. The reason is that you are following a course of life which nourishes the soul. You are cultivating an appetite for the things by which men live; and while that appetite persists and finds its normal food, life will always justify itself.



Two lines of activity help in this development of the soul, both of which easily become so instinctive that the sense of effort is lost. One looks toward service of those about us; the other toward a deepening of our sense of God. Many thoughtful people would say that we must have a sense of God and a purpose to serve Him before we can render our best service to our fellows; and this I think to be true. But men and women so often come, like Abou ben Adhem, to realize their spiritual needs and privileges through their attempts to solve the problems set by others' need that I shall consider this service of others first.

Its nearest and most intimate example is probably in the Family. Some

of you may wonder at this and perhaps question it because of a notion deeply embedded in many minds that the Family is an institution which will somehow manage itself. Indeed, a great many discussions of family problems just now seem based upon the theory that if the Family cannot happily maintain itself without any special effort on the part of those who compose it, then the family relation is a failure. This is like crying when one looks at his neglected garden and its weeds, "What a disheartening sight! What unrewarding soil! What a failure a garden is!" Meanwhile across the way and in the same soil appears a garden that is at once cheerful and fruitful because its owner has thought it worth his thought and effort. These

it has rewarded, not only by giving him food to eat, but by vastly enhancing his interest in life and, incidentally, very likely, that hold upon it which we call health. The difference between the two gardeners is that one, by overlooking his responsibilities, has missed the privileges upon which his gaze was fixed, while the other, by putting first things first, has found the kindly fruits of the earth appearing in their season; and to these material rewards has been added a sense of living in an ordered universe where he may rule the earth and win the sun and wind to be his allies. It was an inspired instinct that led the Hebrew writer to place our first parents in a garden; for a garden is a place where the process of creation still goes on. Disobedience

and neglect with their consequent weeds always invite a return of chaos, while self-control and service as certainly bring in that ordered beauty which the Greeks called "cosmos."

Now the Family is the unit of society. It raises the individual to his own higher powers and at the same time gives him his most intimate experience of other individuals. Here in the Family we gain our first and best lessons in the worth of human affection, in respect for rightful authority, in the true significance of sex, in the practical management of affairs, and especially in the art of getting on with other people. It has often been remarked that the development of man from a position but little above the brutes to his place of dominion was

coincident with, if not due to, the lengthening of his infancy. Young animals quickly mature to the point where they can feed and protect themselves. Their physical growth is rapid and they depend so much upon instinct that they have relatively little to learn. The human baby is not only helpless for a far longer period than the young of any other creature; he has also everything to learn. For a long time his food must be furnished him in the simplest and most easily digested forms; for a yet longer time he must be clothed and protected against the elements by the efforts of others than himself; while longest of all is the period of his education, during which he has to learn everything from walking, speaking, and dreading the fire,

to the practice of some useful calling and the secret of competent wrestling with the larger problems of life. The necessity of such care as shall accomplish this has developed family affection. The children of parents who were faithful to each other and to their parental duties have had in the long run a better chance than the children of others. They have not only survived, but they have also tended to become dominant and to set their impress upon their world. Hence, as the race has developed by these means the means themselves have grown in esteem, until the family relation in which one man and one woman with their children make and keep their own home has come to be regarded as the ideal unit of society; and mem-

bership in such a family has long been thought to be the ideal lot of man, woman, and child.

It still remains the best garden for the growing of a soul; and it will be a sorry day when young men and women cease to think of home-making as an ideal fulfillment of their lives. But the fact must be reiterated that homes do not make themselves happy any more than gardens keep themselves fruitful. The great blessings of life must be planned and paid for. It is not to be expected that a man and a woman of any force of character will have precisely the same tastes or habits. If they are reasonably mature when they marry, there is an inevitable period of adjustment which must be expected and patiently borne with. She

was a wise woman who once told a young man about to be married not to expect the first year of his married life to be the happiest. She raised no question about the love which these young people had for each other; but her eyes were open to the fact that as soon as they returned from their wedding journey and began to face life's responsibilities, a period of trial must necessarily follow. Each must needs get used to the other; each must learn to respect the other's rights and be willing to make some sacrifice both of time and taste for the other's sake. This always takes both grace and patience. There is something tragic in the dismay with which some young people discover what they think to be "incompatibility of temperament" in



those with whom they are mated. The road to happiness does not lie along the path of least resistance here. It must be repeated that homes do not make themselves. Those who would have them must bring good-will in the spirit of service to their making. This may not always be easy, but it is practicable in a multitude of cases where it is not practiced. In many homes little effort in this direction is required because of similarity of taste, easy and adaptable dispositions, and a mutual affection that overrides all threats of circumstance. In others the advent of children rouses latent capacities for service and devotion on the part of both parents. Many a selfish man has found the birth of his child to represent his own new birth into a larger

and less self-centered world; while many a woman threatened with frivolity has had her first large glimpse of life's seriousness as well as of its abiding satisfactions when she held her baby in her arms. These things help "to make the soul," and I have known a considerable number of people whose own search for the Way began with a desire that their children should follow it. Thus the normal person finds the world without as well as the heart within demanding some culture of the spiritual life—crying out, as the Psalmist said, for the living God. I have chosen the family relation to illustrate how all true and generous service helps to meet as well as to emphasize this demand.

A chief means to this culture of the

spiritual life is to be found in private prayer and public worship. It is a curious perversion of knowledge that leads some good people to feel that they cannot pray because, as they say, "they find themselves in a world of law." They imply that if it were a world of whim ruled by a despot, they might find room for prayer and hope by means of it to mould the despot's will. But the Christian idea of prayer is precisely fitted to an ordered universe — it presupposes an ordered universe, indeed, instead of a chaos of whims and fancies. The Companion of Jesus Christ believes in a God "Who leadeth forth the seven Stars and Orion, and Who turneth the shadow of death into the morning." That is to say, this man feels the

world to be so ordered and developed that wherever he searches amid its wonders he finds something that corresponds to the working of his mind. He looks to the planets and finds that their orbits can be mathematically expressed and the rules of their going and coming written down. The world is saturated with thought. Every phenomenon or occurrence which attracts his notice is like a door indicating to him that somewhere within there lives a reasonable explanation or account of what he has beheld. If his mind knocks at that door with patience and courtesy, he will be admitted to acquaintance and it may be to partnership with this indwelling and outworking mind. Some doors open slowly; others at a touch; but none fails to

reveal signs of orderly thought; as though there were something wrapped up in every event which corresponded to the inquiring mind without. He Who lives behind the doors which are always being opened is clearly related to him who knocks at them. Now and then a man cries out that there is nothing here but undirected force and unthinking chance; but the world cannot be convinced. Where thought so clearly and invariably comes out, thought must have its home.

Moreover, men have generally felt that this Power which appears in events moving on in a vast creative process, could be communicated with. The best and bravest of them have felt its Presence as a great fact of life

from which strength and comfort have come to them. The most far-seeing and memorable of these men have felt that this Power made for righteousness and that those who did justice, loved mercy, and walked graciously in the world were the men who most really cast in their lot with It, knew It best, and knew It to be God. Jesus Christ called God, Father, taught that He loved men, and that in His worship and service men would find peace. It seems certain that in this faith and practice Jesus Himself won not only peace, but a conquest of the world of circumstance. Multitudes who have tried His Way have had a like experience. And the Way is open still.

Prayer is that natural and necessary intercourse which a child has with

such a Father. It will include requests, but never demands, since the child will realize his inability to grasp the Father's plans so completely as to justify a demand which might otherwise bring confusion into the larger order of the world. But most of all will this Prayer consist in communion — that is, in an opening of heart and life to One Who understands. Here any request may be brought forward, any burden presented, and every perplexity stated. It is in this experience that the proportions of a distorted life may be restored, its burdens lightened, its sins forgiven, its fountains refilled, and its shallows deepened. This is not the place for an extended discussion of the philosophy of prayer; I am simply noting the fact that the act of

prayer, intelligently and humbly performed, is a chief agent in keeping the soul not only alive, but refreshed, happy, and girt for service.

Private prayer does for our souls what our daily baths and tables do for our bodies. It cleanses and feeds them, thereby enlarging the outlook and strengthening the heart of the whole man. Public worship carries the process on. It finds us as members of a burdened and troubled society with cares, sins, hopes, aspirations, disappointments. It helps to put us into our right relations both as individuals and as component parts of society. Many a restless and distempered soul would be at once calmed and uplifted by quiet meditation with its fellows in the House of God. There is a gen-



erous aspect to the act of praise which tends to enlarge us when we grow petty and self-centered. No service which makes the offering of our substance a part of its worship can fail to bind us more closely to our fellow-men and make us conscious that we belong to the family of God — an experience which brings enduring satisfaction. And preaching, even when in itself rather commonplace, always tends, so far as it is a sincere attempt to deal with life's larger issues, to ennoble us by its reminder that we are creatures of two worlds and that the business of neither can properly be done without some reference to the other. John Bunyan as a tinker or a maker of tagged lace was not necessarily a very significant person; but

this same man mending pots and pans or sitting by his jail door, knotting lace with the vision of the Celestial City and the way thither before his eyes, became a notable element in the world's thought and conduct. When we neglect earth for Heaven, our lives threaten to become unreal. When we neglect Heaven for earth, they grow narrow, hard, and profitless, while the inevitable grave threatens them with defeat. But when we walk the earth with firm and purposeful tread on our way to Heaven, the humblest of us all becomes a figure of dignity and power. It makes a difference, as a wise teacher recently remarked, whether a man feels that he is going to the scrap-heap or whether he is going home. The whole tendency of public wor-

ship and of private prayer is to assure men that their life and conduct have real significance and dignity which death shall enhance rather than diminish. This, too, helps in the making of a soul.

You will find it of further and great advantage to identify yourself with the Christian Church in its service of the world. Reference has been made in an earlier chapter to our obligation to confess ourselves as Disciples. As Companions of the Way it behooves us to walk in the open. But in view of the large number of Christians and the manifold need of the world it is necessary that we organize our resources to meet the need. This was done in the early Church and with more or less effi-

ciency it has been done ever since. Some people delight to point out the inefficiencies, blunders, and occasional disloyalties of the Church in face of the world's need, and they do not lack illustrations. The Church no doubt deserves their rebuke. Yet the fact remains that the Church is the one perennial institution which works ceaselessly for the making of men's souls. So far from ever altogether neglecting its task it is continually discerning new and higher opportunities of adventure. The ordinary observer fails to realize what a tremendously fruitful agency organized religion has been and still remains. It is probably safe to say that no great organization has mothered so many children whom she has con-

tinued to support after they have renounced her or after she has withdrawn her parental control over them. The larger institutions of learning are among these; so are the hospitals; so are the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations; so are multitudes of lesser organizations. Not long since a Boys' Club was started in a New England village which at once showed that it met a real want in the common life. Who started it? The answer will have outlined itself in the reader's mind as soon as it is asked. The minister of one of the churches; while a group of unselfish people, who cared greatly for the best interests of the community and the growing boys in it, gave time, thought, and money to the ad-

venture. Almost as a matter of course they were generally to be found among the workers in the local churches. The first suggestions and material encouragements had come, however, from a friend whose interest in such work was so deep that it had grown to be a chief avocation of his life. Where had this interest been awakened and fostered? Again the answer is instinctively anticipated. It was under the influence of a great metropolitan down-town church. Now these people could have claimed this new organization as belonging to the Church. In point of fact they did not; but let it be clearly seen that they desired to maintain no sectarian or ecclesiastical control over it. A director was employed, and it was

hoped that influences fitted to reach the hearts and mould the wills of the boys would be exerted; but no merely sectarian tests or means were used to attain this end. The thing moved on its own beneficent way and might easily have been cited by a careless onlooker as an instance of moral and spiritual endeavor quite apart from the Christian Church; or have pointed his criticism of the inefficiency and nervelessness of a church that should let such promising work slip from its hands. None the less the spirit of interest that gave it birth, the oversight that kept it useful, the money that paid its bills, and the devotion that assured its continuance, all came almost as directly from the Church of Jesus Christ as though its charter

had borne a bundle of ecclesiastical seals.

It is one instance among many of the fashion in which the Church spends herself for the common good with no reward except the service and the satisfaction of seeing the Kingdom grow. She labors to develop a sense of unity in life — unity between God and man, between the soul and the world of circumstance, and between each man and his fellow-men. She is all the time trying to teach the world what President Hadley has called two or three of the most important practical lessons of Christianity: the habit of intellectual contact which we call “mutual understanding”; the habit of social contact which we call “coöperation”; and the habit



of spiritual contact which we call "courtesy."<sup>1</sup>

It is idle to say that the Church has neither taught nor practiced these lessons well. She has taught and practiced them after a fashion which is a great deal better than not teaching and practicing them at all; and during the last century she has made rapid strides toward a better understanding of her world, a better co-operation of all the spiritual agencies in it, and a higher courtesy toward all with whom she deals. As the agencies toward applying these lessons to life's specific problems are developed they are apt to pass out of the Church's control, sometimes to

<sup>1</sup> Anniversary sermon delivered before Yale University, October 22, 1916.

the delight of the scoffer and to the Church's own sorrow, but upon the whole to the world's advantage. "*Sic vos non vobis*" sang the Latin poet as he watched the bees; "so you labor, but not for yourselves." It is the true office of the Christian Church. Acquisition of vast possessions and the exercise of temporal power do not suit her genius. Her great adventure is not receiving but giving, ministering rather than being ministered unto, inspiring organization for good works rather than managing machineries. But in this adventure of sending the Word of Good-will around the world as well as of teaching mutual understanding, coöperation, and courtesy in the next street, she must have helpers. Despite all that the scoffers

say, the people who make up her worshiping congregations are the people who are to be counted upon most certainly to further the work which she inspires.

It is this adventure which every Companion of Christ's Way is called to share. He is asked to go as far as he has scope upon the errands of grace—that is, of good-will moving out spontaneously to the common service;<sup>1</sup> to give as he has means; and to serve as he has abilities. In order that worship may be significant and service may bring results Christian men must band themselves together. Their coöperation in the Church of Christ will help both

<sup>1</sup> I owe this definition to the late Principal Fairbairn.

the world and the individual to make their souls. In so far as you are a true Companion of the Way you will not shirk that duty.

## VI

### BROOKS IN THE WAY

THE reader of "The Pilgrim's Progress" — and every lover of good literature should know it — will remember that while the Pilgrim's way is often hard and sometimes dangerous, it is by no means lacking in places for relaxation and refreshment. There was an Arbor on the slope of the Hill Difficulty; and on the Hill's crest, close by the highway side, stood the House Beautiful with its hospitable welcome, its good companionship, and its "large upper chamber, whose window opened toward the Sun rising," called Peace. Nor does Bunyan disdain to tell us before he sends his Pil-

grim to rest, "what Christian had to his supper." The Psalmist, too, in picturing the triumph of God's champion, represents him as coming weary out of battle, but, pausing to drink of the brook in his way, he lifts up his head and presses on refreshed. The ascetic life distrusts if it does not fear this phase of experience. It dreads relaxation whose danger it so well knows. The self-indulgent soul, on the other hand, exalts relaxation into one of life's employments. He sleeps in the Arbor instead of merely resting there; he lingers in the House Beautiful long after the real object of its hospitality has been accomplished; and when the Brook of Refreshment appears, instead of drinking and pressing on refreshed, he dallies by it until the Way

is in danger of being altogether forgotten.

Here, then, is one of the problems which the honest traveler will face and try to solve. Life is meant to be a thing of alternating experiences; of waking and sleeping, working and resting, the spending of self upon good objects and the re-creation of vital force. The Brook in the Way is as real an experience of the well-ordered Christian as the enemy to be overcome or the task to be accomplished. But the secret of thus ordering life aright is the use of these means of refreshment as happy incidents rather than ends of experience. The Christian who can relax the strain without untwisting the fiber of his life always gains something in the process.

He adds a generous humanity and grace to his integrity. Jonathan Edwards, good man though he was and progressive, too, far beyond the measure of his day, seems unlovely to us when judged by the sermon on "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," which unfortunately was sensational enough to have become more generally known than anything else in the mass of his writing. But when, through the pages of his "Journal," we see him walking in the Saybrook fields on a Sunday afternoon, his heart brimming with the sunlight of earth as well as heaven, we seem to know a very different man whom it is far easier to love.

If you would gain access to a spring of refreshment that tends to grow



sweeter with years, I commend a real and first-hand acquaintance with our Mother Earth which God long ago pronounced good. There is a story of an old priest who was once found traveling in the Rocky Mountains. He seemed so remote from his accustomed haunts that a fellow-traveler asked him how at his age he had chanced to come so far. The priest replied that some time before he had seen himself in a dream going up to the gates of Heaven. St. Peter met him there and among other inquiries asked how he had enjoyed the beauty of the earth amid which he had lived so long; to whom he, sorely abashed, was forced to answer that he had never thought much about it. Upon waking he resolved to repair this loss so far

as might be, and set out upon his journey. It was a worthy attempt to make up for lost opportunity; but the sober fact remains that if the good priest had missed the beauty of the four seasons passing over his parsonage garden in youth, he was scarcely likely to appreciate even the Alps or Rocky Mountains in his age. We may or may not go afield to see famous spectacles; none the less, the world in its daily and yearly turning will bring the beauty, not of the earth alone, but of the heavens to us. Yet to see it one must look humbly down into the grasses and mosses, abroad with eyes wide open to the vast variety of sun, cloud, rain, and wind in the trees that the seasons bring, and reverently up into the sky. It is a

curious fact that many a discoverer and revealer of the world's beauty has himself led the most humdrum and stay-at-home life. Immanuel Kant has profoundly influenced the thought of civilized man for a century. He delighted in the wonder of the heart within and of the stars above. Yet during his working life he scarce ever went a day's journey from Königsberg. William Cowper taught English poetry a new language and wrote some of the most delectable letters that were ever put on paper. But he, too, was a recluse whose health kept him to the quiet walks of Olney and Weston. Both these men were, however, great readers of books dealing with travel and adventure, and close observers of certain aspects of the

world in which they lived, so that their lives seemed set like pictures in the goodly frame of earth. The entomologist, J. Henri Fabre, who has become so recently and deservedly famous, is another and striking illustration of a life which seemed cabined and meager, but which really was full of variety and delight because he knew the ways of insects and entered so affectionately into lives that the world at large ignored or despised.

It is by no means necessary to be either a philosopher, a poet, or a scientist to make such things as these men studied refresh us. A little sound knowledge joined to a spirit of appreciation will go a long way here. A half-dozen flowers that have become well known, even though they be so

commonplace as carpenter's-heal or yarrow, will lend interest to a walk; a few friendly stars, expected as their appropriate seasons come, and speaking to us something of the message which they once brought to Homer, Virgil, or the Author of Job, distinctly enlarge life's scope; and sufficient acquaintance with trees to enable one to distinguish the delicate tracery of the elm from the rather brusque sturdiness of the ash, or the honest autumn glow of the staghorn sumac in the pasture from the intense brilliance of its poisonous cousin (*rhus vernix*) in the swamp, will sometimes lift an ordinary railway journey out of the tiresome and commonplace and set it in the ranks of the memorable.

A similar distinction is to be noted with reference to the part which animals play in our lives. Both wild and domestic creatures have their uses. But some people take their presence to be a mere matter of course, while others find entertainment and refreshment in it. A man who has ridden many horses in his day will have a store of reminiscence so varied and interesting as he reviews these dumb companionships as notably to enrich life's later years. The great plains and canyons of western Texas will always be associated in the writer's mind with a horse as ugly to look at as he was easy to sit; pictures of the Levant as they rise tend to group themselves about a gray Syrian stallion that once carried me from Jerusalem to Tyre

and Sidon; and some of my most memorable experiences of light and shadow on New England fields have found me on the back of a shapely chestnut gelding, whose mental processes were occasionally as queer as his general companionship was comforting. These things may not belong to the absolute essence of life; but they play so large a part in its atmosphere as to draw a line of distinction between the man who is thankful for them and him who ignores them.

The same thing is true of the dog or cat beside your hearth. Religion is meant to reach them through your unfailing kindness and the intelligence and firmness of your discipline. They in turn have something to give that shall refresh your travel along

the Way. Now and then you hear a worthy person proclaim his fondness for dogs in a truculent tone which clearly implies that he hates cats. He does not observe that he is really proclaiming the limitations of his own nature. Happy the man to whom the purring domesticity and exquisite grace of his cat can bring as real a comfort as the hearty fellowship of his dog. Both have their failings. The dog is sometimes cruel to his victim with a bitterness to which a cat's play with her mouse never attains, and the cat is so inscrutable in her going out and coming in that, like Montaigne, we wonder whether we amuse her or she amuses us. But despite the limitations of our tastes and of their characters the fact remains that the



friendly companionship of pet beasts is one of the refreshments of life which makes for humor and sanity.

The whole question of play comes in here. Some people of the Gradgrind type have tended to excuse play rather grudgingly as a means for taking needful exercise. That is not quite a Christian attitude. The "taking of exercise" is generally a very poor business in itself; while both manual labor and hearty play in moderation not only guard the welfare of the body, but help us to make our souls. The question of work has already been briefly treated. It is worth while to repeat, however, that every one ought to know how to do manual labor because a vast amount of such labor has to be done and we

ought to stand ready to perform our share; many people earn their bread by it and we ought to be willing to stand beside them; it is generally wholesome for the body; and it brings a sort of honest exhilaration to be able thus to help ourselves in fundamental ways. There is a sense of independence which comes from a field which one has planted, or a walk, a bridge, a fence, or a house which one's own hands have helped to build, that scarce anything else can give. It is to be hoped that if universal military service continues in the United States, the term of it will be so divided as not only to familiarize recruits with the manual of arms and other things needful in defensive warfare, but to provide for labor upon productive works

where under democratic conditions men shall render permanent service to their country. A sort of patriotism might be thus fostered quite as keen as and even more wholesome than that which comes from bearing arms in behalf of the commonwealth. It is of the essence of success here, however, that each man should do his share.

The same thing holds true of play. To gain the best results we should play ourselves and not merely watch others play. That tendency in athletics which leads a multitude to watch a few is unwholesome. Many people travel long distances and spend large sums of money to see athletic contests who perhaps persuade themselves that they are playing or at least that they are encouraging genuine play. In point

of fact they are not only doing neither of these things, but they are really encouraging a fashion that is robbing play of its best features and degrading it into a more or less shady profession. The "sporting" page of the newspaper, with its story of the "buying" or "selling" of baseball players or its description of a game told in a special "patter," stands for a distinctly unwholesome trend in our life. So does the craze for college or school yells carefully practiced beforehand, not for the purpose of cheering a good play by one's own team or its opponent, but for a sort of self-assertion in shouting down one's rivals, heartening one's partisans by mere noise and numbers, and occasionally perhaps "rattling" a player on the other side.

The college yell is a rather childish survival of savagery and a sign of the ease with which even well-bred people yield themselves to the mob spirit. It will pass as we become better civilized. Meanwhile it is worth notice as a symbol of a whole group of things which keep play out of its true place in our lives. Many a man fancies that he has been playing when in fact he has only been shouting his lungs out on the side-lines and working himself and his fellows into a sort of frenzy of partisanship. True play is that exercise of mind or body or both which is a pleasure for its own sake, which gives the player happy companionship in the person of partner or opponent, and which provides enough detachment from the burdens and problems of life

so that these things fall into right proportion and perspective. Every one knows what it is to be sadly bothered by some question which, on being laid aside for a while, solves itself, very much as the painting, that, seen too near at hand, seems a mere blur of color, takes on meaning and beauty both when we gain the proper distance. Play often helps us to this standpoint. It tends to sweeten our seriousness with humor and to lend deftness to our touch; so that we distinguish better between the big and the little, the things that really matter and the things to be let go. Steadfastness and zeal are first-rate qualities of the Christian without which he can hope to accomplish nothing; but, granting their possession, his accomplishment will find its worth

greatly increased if it be marked by grace, good cheer, and a happy humor.

But like most good things play is subject to abuse, and this has sometimes become so notorious as to put all amusements under suspicion among serious people. Two or three general rules ought to guard the play of every Christian. It should, in the first place, be so clean and wholesome that all who serve it in any way shall gain rather than lose by the service. "To the pure all things are pure," quotes the playgoer to excuse his presence at some doubtful or frankly indecent spectacle. Suppose we grant that the theater-goer may himself escape unscathed from such contact with uncleanness. How about the performer — generally a woman, of course — whose daily task

it becomes to purvey indecency to the public? If she do it unwillingly and for the sake of bread, the sacrifice is one that no right-minded man would consent to have made in his behalf, and least of all for his pleasure. If, on the other hand, her nature has already been coarsened by her occupation until she does not shrink from indecency or until she possibly finds a sort of pleasurable excitement in it, then tragedy is already developed, and the discerning man who has a spark of honor left will refuse to deepen it. The theater needs a very drastic purging here; and on this side of the line which separates the decent from the vile there is a large territory now ruled by stupidity and coarseness which ought to be rescued by playwrights and audiences alike.



As a concrete illustration might be cited a recent play, generally clever and quite innocent of indecency, in which an elderly woman of birth and breeding was made at certain intervals to rip out an oath. There was no occasion for it except to raise a silly laugh from people who think it funny to hear a woman swear. The whole thing was really stupid, showing either that the playwright was unable to depict a brusque and masterful character except by such childish means, or else that he was so contemptuous of his audience as to fancy that they could be amused by sheer coarseness. The latter was probably the reason, and it was justified by the result, since apparently decent and possibly intelligent people dissolved in laughter at

nothing beyond the fact that an oath had been dragged upon the stage by main force. So great a nuisance has this form of stupidity become that the illustrated papers have satirized it, and "Life" not long since depicted a highly amused audience of well-dressed people with the legend "Some one on the stage has just said 'D—n.'"

All so-called "sport" that disregards suffering, or that possibly finds a cruel excitement in watching it, ought to be ruled out of a Christian's play. The early Church rendered a true service to the world by its protest against the shows of the arena where men and beasts fought each other for the pleasure of the people. The baiting of bulls or bears by savage dogs, while the crowd looked on to see the

bull teased to madness and an occasional dog tossed or gored, was a modified form of the same debasing play. Macaulay said that the Puritans hated these things, not because they hurt the beast, but because they pleased the people. His irony had a half-truth hidden in it. The Puritan, like the Christian of the early Church, did a highly needed service in protesting against cruelty and immorality in the amusements of his day; but when he fell so in love with reform as to become grudging toward all play and suspicious of the play spirit, then he exerted a merely deadening influence and invited reaction. By degrees we become more humane as the character of true play is better understood. The cock-fight and dog-fight of yes-

terday are to-day under the ban; and the clay pigeon has pretty generally replaced its living prototype in shooting-matches. Boxing holds its ground and may perhaps be admitted to have a little — a very little — to say for itself; but when followed as a profession and exploited for the sake of money it must also be fairly admitted to be bad.

It is here that some reader who likes to test to the uttermost the consistency of his guide will raise the question of shooting and fishing. Do not these bring death to innocent creatures? Does not the hunter or fisherman delight to inflict it? Are not hunting and fishing, therefore, instruments of cruelty, and should not they too be foregone by right-minded lovers

of play? I do not think so. The line which separates right from wrong seems to run across these forms of play rather than to one side of them. The true sportsman never inflicts pain thoughtlessly or takes life recklessly. He does inflict death, but death is an inevitable event to the bird or the fish. It comes as suddenly and painlessly at his hands as it can generally come and the creature thus captured is put to good use. All wholesale killing or such attempts to kill as are likely to involve mere wounding and loss are wrong and are frowned upon by the true master of rod or gun. Some whose taste is against such things will think this but lame and partial reasoning; but those who love field or sea will understand and heed.

The question of taste will do much to determine the refreshment which we obtain from books. Despite the fact that the worth of a reading habit has been sometimes exaggerated, everybody ought to cultivate the friendship of books, and many have found them to be among the best gifts of God. These are the windows through which we look at wider scenes when our own landscape seems narrow or dark. They tell us the story of other days and their contribution to the making of our world; they hearten us sometimes by introducing us to lives so unlike our own as to make us self-forgetful, and again by showing us our own circumstances under so new a light that the commonplace grows beautiful. Moreover, they vastly widen the cir-

cle of our friends. Sometimes these are the authors whose companionship comforts us; and at others they are characters in poetry or fiction who seem as real as though they had walked the earth. It is said that when Alfred Tennyson's name was proposed for the Laureateship, Sir Robert Peel, then Prime Minister, had scarcely heard of him. Procuring a volume of his poems, he read as far as "Ulysses" and at once made the appointment. Many struggling men since then have felt the influence of that one poem to be like the sound of a trumpet to them. Ulysses, growing old, to be sure, yet confident of the worth of life's adventure and resolute to push it farther, has proved himself to be quite as real and heartening an element in life as

though he were an historical figure. The thoughts and dreams of inspired writers are thus among the most vital of realities. So the young man who has learned the secret of Wordsworth's love of common things has resources that age cannot wither or custom stale. He will always have a secret place of peace wherein to take refuge when the world grows too loud.

Not peace that grows by Lethe, scentless flower,  
 There in white languors to decline and cease;  
 But peace whose names are also rapture, power,  
*Clear sight, and love; for these are parts of*  
*peace.*<sup>1</sup>

Of course, the best things here must be sought or at least accepted. The reader of nothing but the current popular novel or snippets in the maga-

<sup>1</sup> William Watson, *Wordsworth's Grave*.



zines will find little of either nourishment or refreshment; but if he be wise enough to discriminate and choose the best, then the incalculable wealth of Shakespeare, the broad humanity of Scott, the intense vitality of Dickens, and the indescribable quality that brings into Thackeray's page mirth, irony, and tears, are all his if he will claim them.

The Christian who makes much of the privileges of his faith has a private key to this garden of delights; for a knowledge of the Bible not only educates the literary taste, but opens the doors of many treasures that must remain tight closed without it. Religion has been in every age a chief inspirer of literature. Great literature is packed with reference and allusion to the

things of faith; and it is to the man of faith that she yields her wealth most lavishly.

The reader who will review this chapter will discover that it has dealt primarily with the friendly element in our association with the world in which we live, the beasts that inhabit it, our chance playmates, and the men whose printed words reach us even though we never behold their faces. The refreshment of life is thus bound up with friendship and reaches its highest development in that relation between us and our associates. One of the memorable sayings of Jesus is, "Henceforth I call you not servants . . . but I have called you friends." This was His triumph, that He had taken

these plain men as **H**e found them in the world, taught them as **D**isciples, trained them as **A**postles, but most particularly won their friendly devotion. **H**is method when used by **H**is followers wins men still; and the man who has friends finds brooks of refreshment along every path of life. Friends are not to be won and certainly not to be kept by a mere contrivance; nor is the man who has rewarding friendships necessarily a "popular" man. Indeed, in school, college, or general society, nothing is much more certain to defeat its own ends than a desire to be "popular." College classes in their early days together almost always see a few men who rise quickly into prominence because of some gifts of appearance or

address joined to a desire to be known. They rarely retain their leadership. The men whose influence and memory abide are likely to be men of too solid qualities for such a sudden rise. They are men of parts and very likely of ambitions; but these are subordinated to some common service. It is true that the ideals of this service are often boyish and immature; but such as they are they clearly determine a multitude of choices. These men come to have friends because they show themselves friendly.

Such a man may or may not reach a place of leadership in his large or small world. His happiness depends very little upon that; but a good measure of happiness will be assured to him if by serviceable and friendly

bearing he win friends and then by honest adherence to high standards he retain both their affection and respect. But friends have their rights. The joy and satisfaction of friendship are likely to fly out of the window if jealousy be admitted at one's door. My friend not only has a right to his honest opinion, which may differ from mine; he has a right to the best construction of his motives when he chooses a line of action which I would not choose or which I cannot understand. He has equal rights with me to other friendships than that which unites us, and if he can see lovable qualities in people whom I shrink from, so much the better for him and conceivably for me if he reveal this better side to my appreciation. Of

course, common sense — that is, the practical working of God's Spirit in man — must enter into all this relation. In estimating the worth of a friend we are not to confound a mere varnish of manner or a mental cleverness with the qualities of heart and character which wear and grow better with use; nor are we to deny that some companionships are likely to prove dangerous even though they bear the outward signs of friendship. These things must be brought to the great tests of the Way — Purity, Unselfishness, Honor. But if these are met, then the society of other people is likely to prove one of the abiding satisfactions of life; for we are gregarious creatures meant to live, laugh, and weep, to love and serve together.

Thus this little book has set forth the Christian Religion as a matter which no intelligent person can afford to neglect. It has depicted the Christian as the person who is willing to hear and to consider the Word of Jesus Christ; and who then proceeds so far as he honestly can to embody the doctrine and spread the knowledge of it. The Problems of his experience were next considered, first as related to questions of faith and then as to questions of conduct. Then came a discussion of the enlargement of experience which shall make a man not only good, but efficient and well endowed; and finally, considerable space was given to the means of refreshment which enhance the Christian's Way.

That Way has so often been pictured as narrow that men have sometimes thought its experience to be meager. This is not true. "Strait" its gate is in the sense of having definite and specific meaning. Narrow the Way sometimes appears as every road of conduct proves to be which calls for self-control, resolution, and progress toward a definite and worthy end. But the life involved is neither cabined nor confined. There is room in it for all sorts of worthy experience and for all sorts and conditions of men. The Christian is expected to be, not merely a man of the first century putting his feet in the footprints of Jesus of Nazareth, but a man of his own century carrying into its activities and problems the Holy Spirit of God.





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